

DNR, EPA Announce Cleanup Agreement

By Greg Swanson, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

An agreement to design the cleanup for three sections of the Lower Fox River and Green Bay was announced by Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Wednesday, March 17.

The agreement, signed by Georgia-Pacific Corp. and NCR Corp., commits the companies to design the cleanup of PCB-contaminated sediment from Little Lake Butte des Morts to the mouth of the river and Green Bay, otherwise known as Operable Units 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Approximately \$6.5 million of the funding will come from a 2001 agreement (consent decree) between the agencies and Appleton Papers, Inc./NCR Corp. to fund cleanup and natural resource damage assessment activities in the river and bay. In a 2003 agreement, Georgia-Pacific committed up to \$4 million for preliminary design work in OU 4, the portion of the river from the DePere Dam to the mouth of the river.

Wisconsin Gov. Jim Doyle noted, "This agreement demonstrates, again, our desire to move forward as quickly as possible with the Fox River cleanup project. By planning ahead and working cooperatively, we are able to build on the preliminary investigations and surveying work on the river paid for with money from the 2001 API/NCR interim settlements."

EPA Regional Administrator Tom Skinner was also pleased.

"The public will see contractors working on the river this summer as a result of this agreement," he said. "This is a key milestone in the cleanup of the Fox River."

While more investigation and preliminary work will begin early this summer, the specifics of the agreement provided for the companies to submit a work plan by the end of March. This will set a schedule that could result in a final design for the cleanup of these portions of the river by the end of 2005.

See Cleanup Agreement, Page 2

Court Restores Internet For Fish and Wildlife Service

By Colette Charbonneau, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Internet and e-mail access were temporarily restored through a federal appeals court decision in late March after being shut down for about 11 days.

U.S. District Court Judge Royce C. Lamberth shut down DOI's electronic communications on Monday, March 15 because he said the department had failed to fix computer security problems involved in ongoing litigation over the Cobell Indian Trust. His decision covered computer connections and Web sites for:

- Fish and Wildlife Service
- Inspector General's Office
- Minerals Management Service
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Office of the Special Trustee
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Office of Surface Mining
- National Business Center

See Internet, Page 2

Vinland Files Lawsuit

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The town of Vinland filed a lawsuit in state circuit court on Tuesday, Feb. 24 to challenge the possible use of a local landfill to dispose of sediment scheduled to be removed from Little Lake Butte des Morts.

The town dropped EPA from the lawsuit as of Thursday, March 25. However at press time, legal action continued against DNR.

The landfill, located in the town, is owned by Georgia-Pacific Corp. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources have indicated that this is a possible location to dispose of sediment from Little Lake Butte des Morts as part of the Lower Fox River cleanup.

After PCB-contaminated sediment is dredged from the lake, it might be taken to this landfill for proper disposal. "This is a desirable option since it is so close to the lake," said EPA Remedial Project Manager Jim Hahnenberg. "It could help keep disposal costs down."

Town officials maintain that another technology, called vitrification, should be used. Vitrification uses extremely high heat to destroy PCBs and then recycles the sediment as a glass by-product. The agencies are staying with their original plan because a change to vitrification would add about \$30 million to the cost for this portion of the cleanup. Although EPA and DNR will consider any new information regarding vitrification, at this time, it is not the approach that will be taken at Little Lake Butte des Morts.

According to Hahnenberg, vitrification has no proven track record to show how practical or cost effective it might be for Little Lake Butte des Morts. "We are reluctant to use vitrification for a number of reasons," he said. "We are very concerned that this technology has only been pilot tested and has not yet been used on a large-scale project similar to the Lower Fox River."

Cleanup Agreement *from Page 1*

The design will include:

- a long-term monitoring plan
- institutional controls including existing fish and duck consumption advisories for OUs 2 and 5
- a plan to remove sediment with PCB concentrations greater than 1 part per million in OUs 3 and 4 and Deposit DD (just upstream of the Little Rapids Dam) in OU 2
- plans for building on-shore staging area(s) for sediment management and transportation, dredging in the river, removing water from the dredged sediment, and transporting and disposing of the sediment

The agreement is available electronically at www.dnr.wi.gov/org/water/wm/lowerfox/whatsnew.html. Copies are also available for review at the information repositories located at the public libraries in Appleton, Green Bay, Oneida, Oshkosh and Sturgeon Bay and in the administrative record maintained at DNR offices in Madison and Green Bay and at EPA's Chicago office.

Internet *from Page 1*

The National Park Service, U.S. Geological Survey and the DOI budget office remained online. All connections for FWS Region 3, which covers Wisconsin, were affected. When the judge is convinced that an agency's connections to the Internet are secure, he will allow permanent reconnection of e-mail and posting to Web sites.

Lower Fox River/Green Bay restoration information can always be found at the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/lowerfox/nrda.html

News from the Lower Fox River/Green Bay Natural Resource Trustee Council will continue to be posted on this site. Colette Charbonneau, FWS restoration coordinator, may be contacted by calling (920) 866-1726 or via fax at (920) 866-1710.

Health Department Makes Plans To Inform, Involve Communities

By James Morrison, Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services

The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services has several objectives in the works so staff can continue to work with communities along the Lower Fox River.

This summer, the department plans to provide:

- signs and displays at key access points along the river
- outreach materials geared toward Asian and Hispanic residents
- public service announcements
- more effective presentations in the communities
- classroom activities, including more presentations to English as a Second Language classes
- better distribution of fish advisories through local retailers, service organizations and schools

The department hopes that new signs and displays at important access points along the river will help remind anglers about the advisories even though they have not changed since last year. The new signs and displays will have specific information in multiple languages for each part of the river. Where possible, the department will provide expanded educational materials and graphics at local park facilities along the river.

The department would also like to expand upon successful streamside surveys done by Public Health Educator Dyan Steenport. She surveyed anglers in 2000 along the river to tell them about existing fish advisories. She also evaluated whether anglers were aware of the advisories and how well they were understood.

“We feel the personal contact with the community is very important,” Steenport said. “We are seeking ways to expand upon these efforts by increasing the coverage and frequency of the streamside surveys of the Lower Fox River.”

One of the challenges the department faces in its outreach efforts is balancing the fish advisories related specifically to the PCB contamination of the Lower Fox River with advisories elsewhere in the state. There are advisories for PCBs, mercury in sport fish, and for fish available in stores. The department is following up on a number of recent news stories highlighting the attention fish advisories are getting.

The department is also reviewing findings recently released by the University of Illinois. The university suggests that combined health effects of mercury and PCBs may be greater than either contaminant acting alone. While mercury advisories are not as stringent as PCBs in the Lower Fox River, the department reminds people that fishing there is still subject to the statewide mercury advisory. Since the combined effects of many environmental contaminants including PCBs and mercury are not well understood, health department staff encourages everyone to get familiar with all sources of contaminants when considering local advisories and which fish to eat.

Questions regarding Lower Fox River fish advisories should be directed to Jim Morrison, public health educator at (608) 267-3227 or at morrijm1@dhfs.state.wi.us.

The Fox River Current is featuring promising natural resource damage assessment projects in and near the Lower Fox River.

Spotlight On:

Menominee Nation Wild Rice Reintroduction Program

By Doug Cox, Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin

Using restoration settlement funds, the Menominee tribe began a study last summer of 15 lakes on the reservation to determine the history and productivity of wild rice growth.

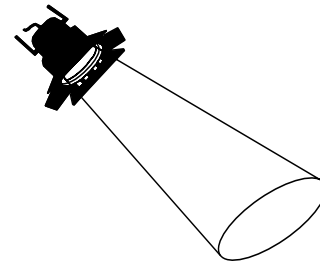
Although studies are not typically approved by the Lower Fox River/Green Bay Natural Resource Trustee Council, the tribe's proposal was accepted. This "phase-one study" will provide information to the tribe on where wild rice can grow before a restoration project can actually happen. Depending on the study's results, the tribe hopes to continue its plan to restore wild rice throughout the reservation.

"The council recognized that this will lead to the location for an actual project," said Tom Nelson, member of the council's restoration technical representatives team from the Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin. "It will find the best location for wild rice to grow and ensure the success of a final project. The fact that Menominee is also using some of its own money for the study was also appealing to the trustee council."

Goals of the study include learning if there are suitable areas that can support wild rice introduction to benefit the tribe as well as the ecosystem. Because wild rice is actually planted in water bodies up to four inches deep, the tribe's contractor is assessing reseeding efforts as well as the general decline of wild rice wetlands to develop a monitoring and management program. The study is focusing on possible past negative effects from people as well as from natural occurrences.

"I think this project would greatly increase the tribe's capacity to harvest the rice because we have only a limited source to harvest," said Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Dave Grignon. "I hope the wild rice restoration project is more successful in the future."

Early results are in on water quality, aquatic plants, watershed mapping and sediment. Analysis on microscopic events in lakes to estimate how productive



As wild rice stalks grow, they are regularly monitored and measured.

they can be is nearly done. Another 15-20 lakes on the northern part of the reservation will be assessed this year to see if they are suitable to grow wild rice. All of the findings will be included in the tribe's final report which will be available by the end of this year.

The ecology of wild rice is not well understood nor has it been widely studied. The distribution of wild rice has been greatly reduced through the years within the Great Lakes Region and specifically within the Menominee reservation.

The reservation was created in 1854 for the Menominee Indian People after an early treaty tried to move the tribe to Minnesota. Many historic accounts attribute the available beds of wild rice as the reason for the location of the current reservation.

During the late 1800s and into the early 1900s, the tribe harvested wild rice to help feed people through the harsh winter months. By 1970, wild rice had virtually disappeared, possibly due to a large shoreland development in the southeastern portion of the reservation that destroyed eight lakes. This

See Spotlight, Page 5

Spotlight *from Page 4*

development was built when the Menominee tribe was disbanded in 1954 through a congressional act.

When the tribe was restored in 1972 under a new restoration act, the economic, social, cultural and environmental effects were severe. The tribe is still trying to recover. The ability to again harvest an abundance of wild rice will provide food to the Menominee People—food that has been absent from their diets, as well as their culture, for nearly 50 years.

“Wild rice was given to the Menominee People at the time of creation by the ‘Creator,’” according to Grignon. “The ‘Creator’ said we would always have the rice. It is sacred to the Menominee People because it gives us life. It is a mainstay at all tribal ceremonial feasts and is the namesake of the tribe.”

The natural resource trustees are comprised of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, Menominee, Michigan Attorney General, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

For further information on natural resource damage assessment projects, contact Trustee Council Coordinator Colette Charbonneau, FWS, at (920) 866-1726.

More Historic Surveys Set For Little Lake Butte des Morts Area

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Another round of studies on the possible effects to cultural resources from the cleanup in Little Lake Butte des Morts is scheduled for this spring.

Following the recommendations of the first study, the Stage IA Cultural Resources Survey as well as those from the state historic preservation officer, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will oversee a Stage IB Site Recognition Survey. This will take place on property in the town of Menasha on the west side of Little Lake Butte des Morts, just south of state Route 441. A similar study will also be done along the bottom of the Lower Fox River near the lake.

These studies will be done in time for work to begin in June. That work will include construction of the dewatering and water treatment facilities that will be used during the dredging of contaminated sediment from the lake. According to the preservation officer, the survey will locate important cultural resources that

— See **Historic Surveys**, Page 7

Wild Rice: Cooking 101

By Tom Nelson, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin

Because harvesting authentic wild rice is tedious, it is generally much more expensive in grocery stores.

To gather rice, two people travel by canoe to individual rice stalks. While one person steadies the canoe, the other person bends a stalk, taps it with a stick and catches the ripe rice in a basket or on the floor of the canoe as it falls off. Since wild rice takes up to six weeks to ripen, stalks are visited more than once until all of the rice has been harvested.

Here is a recipe so you can try using the real thing:

Wild Rice Basic Preparation

1 cup hand-harvested wild rice
3 cups water
½ teaspoon salt

Rinse the rice until water runs clear.

Place wild rice, water and salt in a 3-quart sauce pan.

Bring to boil, reduce heat to simmer and cover.

Cook for 25 minutes or until most of the water is absorbed.

For softer rice and less texture, add 1/3 cup more water and extend cooking time.

Drain and serve or reserve for use in other recipes.

A simple dish to make is to add ground meat and cream of mushroom soup to the cooked rice.

Wild rice adds a unique flavor when used in soups in place of white rice or barley.

Profile On ... Jim Morrison

New State Health Official Tunes In On Lower Fox River Issues

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

When the name Jim Morrison comes up in conversation, most people think of the lead singer for the 1960s rock group, "The Doors."

Although the Lower Fox River Team understands this way of thinking, it would like to make a pitch to change that because another Jim Morrison recently burst onto the scene. This Jim Morrison won't be seen flinging a microphone stand at a public meeting to incite a riot nor will he go into heavy monologues about the evils of war. He does hope to light the fire of everyone he meets, however.

Morrison, a public health educator with the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services since last November, claims to be nothing like his famous namesake. Actually, he is a third generation James Morrison with only one connection to the singer/songwriter. "I was born on the same date the other Jim Morrison died," he said.

Morrison, 39, added that he isn't musically inclined. "But, my goal someday is to take guitar lessons seriously," he stated.

In the meantime, Morrison will be taking his new job seriously. He has lots of experience in environmental health and lots of projects in mind in relation to the Lower Fox River. "I'm working on new signs at key access points along the river," he explained. "Another priority is to expand on our angler survey to find out if our message is getting across."

Originally from the Chicago area, Morrison previously worked as a consultant on indoor air quality and as a health officer for Fairfax County, Va. He also worked at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point as health and safety director from 1993-2001. "So, Wisconsin isn't unfamiliar territory for me," he stated.

Because his past experience always involved working with people, Morrison said it wasn't hard to hit the ground running when he was hired by the state of Wisconsin four months ago. "I've had involvement



Jim Morrison

with people affected by toxic exposures," he continued. "I'm also a certified industrial hygienist and hazardous materials manager which give me a technical background. I can bring a broad perspective to this job."

Morrison, who holds bachelor's and master's degrees in environmental health from Illinois State University and University of Michigan respectively said he looks forward to the challenge of this project. "I want to paint a whole picture for people in a simple fashion so they can make reasonable choices," he said.

Although an Illinois native, Morrison wanted to relocate to Madison for a better quality of life for his family. "Madison doesn't have the traffic and congestion that Chicago has," he stated. "But, my pro sports loyalties have stayed with Chicago. I really want to see the Cubs win the World Series this year."

As a new Madison resident, he looks forward to his sons' first baseball season, enjoys working in the yard, and is fond of his mineral and rock collection. "We actually take vacations in the upper peninsula of Michigan to copper mines to collect rocks," he added.

Now, he just needs to make time for those guitar lessons.....



Out and About...

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The Fox River Intergovernmental Partnership, made up of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin and Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, regularly provides speakers to organizations in the Fox Valley area. The following partners recently made presentations:

February

- ◆ *Greg Hill*, DNR: University of Wisconsin–Madison Environmental Toxicology Colloquium, Madison; general Lower Fox River cleanup.

March

- ◆ *Jim Hahnenberg*, EPA: Elks Club Water Safety Days conference, Rochester, Minn.; general Lower Fox River cleanup and dredging techniques.

Historic Surveys from Page 5

could be affected by the project and will target those resources that require further investigation.

According to EPA Remedial Project Manager Jim Hahnenberg, three different surveys will be used as part of the design for the cleanup at the lake, also referred to as Operable Unit 1:

- lake bottom survey to detail the water depth
- sonar survey which is comparable to taking an aerial photograph of the river bottom
- a survey that identifies the layers of sediment and what, if anything, is buried there

“If we find a resource, we will have to develop a plan to avoid disturbing or damaging it,” Hahnenberg explained. “Our first preference is to avoid it. If we can’t avoid it, then we will have to do something to compensate for any damage done.”

When this historic study is completed, a report is required to detail recommendations for further action in relation to the cleanup.

Check out these Web sites:

<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/lowerfox/>

<http://www.epa.gov/region5/sites/foxriver/>

<http://www.fws.gov/r9dec/nrdar/nrdamain.html>

<http://www.fws.gov/r3pao/nrda/>

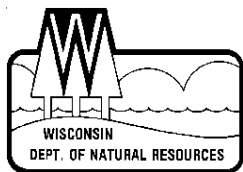
Information Available at Local Libraries

The Intergovernmental Partners invite the public to review technical reports, fact sheets and other documents related to the Lower Fox River cleanup at information repositories set up in the reference sections of the following local libraries. Information repositories at the public libraries in DePere, Kaukauna, Little Chute, Neenah and Wrightstown have been discontinued. However, binders containing fact sheets will be mailed to and maintained at these locations as well as at the repositories listed below.

- **Appleton Public Library**, 225 N. Oneida St., Appleton, Wis.; (920) 832-6170
- **Brown County Library**, 515 Pine St., Green Bay, Wis.; (920) 448-4381, Ext. 394
- **Door County Library**, 107 S. Fourth Ave., Sturgeon Bay, Wis.; (920) 743-6578
- **Oneida Community Library**, 201 Elm St., Oneida, Wis.; (920) 869-2210
- **Oshkosh Public Library**, 106 Washington Ave., Oshkosh, Wis.; (920) 236-5200



An administrative record, which contains detailed information upon which the selection of the final site cleanup plan was based, is also available for review at two DNR offices: 801 E. Walnut St., Green Bay, Wis. and 101 S. Webster St., 3rd Floor, Madison, Wis. An administrative record is also available at the EPA Record Center, 77 W. Jackson Blvd., 7th Floor, Chicago, Ill.



Prepared by the Fox River Intergovernmental Partnership: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Supporting agencies include Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in these articles are solely those of the authors and are not necessarily shared by all members of the Fox River Intergovernmental Partnership.

INSIDE FOX RIVER CURRENT

DNR, EPA Announce Cleanup Agreement	1
Court Restores Internet For Fish and Wildlife Service	1
Vinland Files Lawsuit	2
Health Department Makes Plans To Inform, Involve Communities	3
Spotlight On: Menominee Nation Wild Rice Reintroduction Program	4
More Historic Surveys Set For Little Lake Butte des Morts	5
Wild Rice: Cooking 101	5
Profile On... Jim Morrison	6
Out and About...	7
Information Repository Locations	7
Web Site Addresses	7

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